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The Honorable Kim Schrier, MD
1123 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congresswoman Schrier,

On behalf of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), we are pleased to support the Vaccine Awareness Campaign to Champion Immunization Nationally and Enhance Safety Act of 2019 (H.R. 2862). As the nation grapples with one of the largest measles outbreaks in history, it is paramount that government officials, public health leaders, healthcare professionals, and community-based partners across the nation join together to share the facts about the safety and efficacy of vaccines. The health concerns that parents have over the risks of vaccination need to be addressed with care and compassion, but also with facts so that informed decisions can be made and so that people can protect themselves and their loved ones from dangerous, vaccine-preventable diseases.

ASTHO applauds the emphasis on the importance of using rigorous scientific approaches to learn more about the factors that drive vaccine hesitancy and lack of confidence beliefs. This legislation also includes a vital provision authorizing a public awareness campaign on the importance of vaccinations and the creation of culturally and linguistically competent resources that may be tailored for communities with high rates of unvaccinated individuals. The outreach to these populations should rely upon the expertise of trusted community leaders and public health officials who are knowledgeable about communications strategies and approaches. While ASTHO is supportive of the campaign, we remain concerned that the authorization level for it is too low. As this bill goes through the legislative process, we strongly urge Congress to increase the authorization level.

We look forward to partnering with you on the VACCINES Act and other initiatives of mutual interest. Please contact Carolyn Mullen, chief of government affairs and public relations, at cmullen@astho.org for additional information. Thank you for your time, commitment, and passion for protecting the health of the population!

Sincerely,



Michael Fraser, PhD, MS, CAE, FCPP
Chief Executive Officer
Association of State and Territorial Health Officials